



## Economics

By ERIK BERT

The editorial writer of the Guild Reporter, organ of the American Newspaper Guild, related in the Feb. 14 issue that he found it impossible to write a parody about Lord Thomson, head of the Thomson publishing empire in Britain.

It is difficult to understand why the editor wanted to write a parody about Lord Thomson. He asks:

"How can you parody a man who tells an interviewer . . . that 'I think I'd mortgage my soul' to buy New York Times?"

What's so strange about that? What U.S. publisher would not mortgage his soul to buy the New York Times? In fact, what U.S. publisher's soul is not already mortgaged to the Almighty Dollar?

...Or, take the New York Times reporters who are in the task force whose job it is to subvert individuals in the socialist countries. To whom do their souls belong? To

Mrs. Arthur Hays Sulzberger, owner of the Times, and her wealth of \$200 million to \$300 million; to the CIA: or are they just devout adherents of imperialism?

Or, take the officers of the American Newspaper Guild. To whom had they sold their souls when they took more than one million dollars from the CIA for activities in Latin America, Africa, and Asia? in Latin America, Africa, and Asia?

Enough of Souls. Let's get back to Lord Thomson.

The Guild Reporter editor is distressed to find that Lord Thomson said he was buying U.S. newspapers because "That's where the money is"; that owning a television station was "as good as a government license to print money."

What is so strange about that? Newspaper Guild negotiators know when they enter contract talks with the boss that he is interested in the newspaper because "that's where the money is."

The Guild Reporter editor sums up his discontent:

"Thomson . . . represents almost the reductio ad absurdum of that breed of publisher whose creed is the profit sheet and whose anthem the ring of the cash register."

But Thomson is not a special breed of publisher. He is the publisher under capitalism, a capitalist publisher. That is not said in any derogatory sense. Under capitalism, publishing is capitalist; under socialism, publishing is socialist.

What kind of creed—other than the "profit sheet"—does the GR editor expect Lord Thomson, or any other commercial publisher, to espouse? What kind of anthem—other than the "ring of the cash register"—does the GR editor expect the publisher to sing? "This land is your land . . . from California to the New York island," perhaps?

Lord Thomson doesn't deserve a parody. He needs understanding, as do all his brothers in sin, as an exploiter.

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